

drawn to method of holding panels, classified in class 264, subclass 232.

Applicant is required under 35 U.S.C. 121 to elect a single disclosed species for prosecution on the merits to which the claims shall be restricted if no generic claim is finally held to be allowable. Currently, Claim 16 appears generic.

The Applicants elect Group I without traverse, Claims 1-14 and 18-28.

In the Claims:

Please cancel Claims 15-17 and 29-47 without prejudice to further prosecution on the merits.

Please add new Claims 48-58 as follows:

1 48 (New) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of providing a
2 racking system, wherein the racking system includes a plurality of racks, each of the
3 racks having a peripheral support flange, each of the racks further having top and
4 bottom faces having a plurality of elongated pockets, each of the elongated pockets
5 adapted to receive an edge of the tile so that a row of the tiles are supported on each
6 of the racks in a vertical orientation.

4B1 1 49. (New) The method of Claim 48, further comprising the step of stacking
2 the racks with the row of the tiles on each in a vertical orientation.

1 50. (New) The method of Claim 49, further comprising the step of engaging
2 a support rod with the peripheral support flange to secure the racks.

1 51. (New) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of providing a
2 plurality of bosses on a bottom plate of the outer shells, wherein when stacking the
3 shells the bosses on the bottom plate of one of the tiles contacts a top plate of the
4 outer shell of an adjacent tile to provide a clearance between the tiles.

1 52. (New) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of loading the
2 outer shells into a rack.

53. (New) The method of Claim 52, further comprising the step of holding the outer shells in a substantially vertical orientation in the rack.

54. (New) The method of Claim 52, further comprising the step of protecting a lower edge of the outer shells in the rack.

55. (New) The method of Claim 52, further comprising the step of moving the rack through a plurality of stations, whereby one or more manufacturing operations may be performed on the outer shells.

56. (New) The method of Claim 10, further comprising the step of providing a structure adapted to conduct one or more manufacturing operations on the outer shells, the structure including a receiving station adapted to receive the outer shells, a filling station adapted to fill the outer shells with the core material to form the tiles, a washing station adapted to wash the tiles, a drying station adapted to dry the tiles, an inspection station adapted to inspect the tiles, and a delivery station adapted to deliver the tiles to a local installation site.

57. (New) The method of Claim 1, further comprising the step of providing a rack configured to hold and protect the outer shells, the rack including a horizontal tray having a top side, a bottom side, and a vertical wall extending from a perimeter of the horizontal tray, and a continuous extension projecting outward from an end portion of the vertical wall.

58. (New) A method of making tiles for use in a floor system, the tiles comprising a shell and a core material, the method comprising:

- constructing the shells at a first location;
- providing at least one rack to hold the shells;
- transporting the shells to a second location having a structure with a plurality of stations for conducting one or more manufacturing operations on the shells;
- loading the shells in the rack in a substantially vertical orientation;
- filling the shells with the core material at the second location to form the tiles;
- and
- delivering the tiles to an installation location.

No new matter has been added.

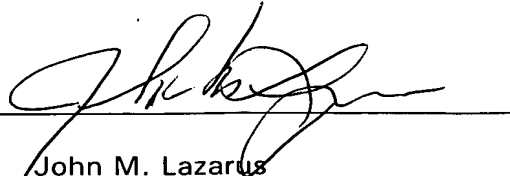
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The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

Date MAY 23, 2002

By



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